

Washington State  
Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety  
P.O. Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250



March 26, 2002

The Honorable Don Young  
United States House of Representatives  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Sub-Committee on Highways and Transit  
2111 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Young:

**Subject: Congressional House Bill 3609**

Following the fatal pipeline incident in Bellingham Washington in June of 1999, the Washington State Legislature created in law the Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety. Committee members are appointed by the Governor and represent local government, elected officials, citizens, and owners and operators of hazardous liquid and natural gas pipelines. The Committee was established to advise state, local, and federal agencies on pipeline safety matters.

The Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety strongly encourages Congress to pass a pipeline safety bill this year that will enhance our Nation's pipeline safety laws and re-authorizes the federal Office of Pipeline Safety. We have reviewed H.R. 3609, the "Pipeline Infrastructure Protection to Enhance Security and Safety Act," and respectfully request your consideration of additional pertinent safety issues we believe are critical to a strong national pipeline safety program. As you know, Representatives Jennifer Dunn and Rick Larsen and other members of the Washington congressional delegation have worked diligently to introduce legislation that would improve pipeline safety. We hope you will include the following provisions in the re-authorization bill:

- **Increase State Oversight**  
It is critical that the Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) be directed in law to establish interstate agency partnerships with willing states and delegate to these states the authority to oversee interstate pipeline safety. This will facilitate more frequent and thorough oversight of pipeline facilities because of the additional resources it will bring to OPS's oversight efforts.
- **Require Integrity Management Plans and Actions**  
OPS must be directed in law to develop periodic inspection and assessment requirements for all pipeline companies. In addition to rules recently adopted for hazardous liquid

pipelines, OPS needs to extend its integrity management rules to natural gas pipelines. Also, it is vital that states and local governments be authorized to review and comment on the adequacy of all the plans and the effectiveness of implementation of these plans.

- **Mandate Operator Training**

Pipeline operators must be required to submit training plans and operator qualification testing plans to OPS and the authorized state agencies for review. States must also be authorized to review and comment on the adequacy of the plans and the re-qualification testing intervals.

- **Work with Local Communities**

Following the Bellingham incident, we learned what limited information local communities had about the pipelines running through our cities and towns. It is very important that pipeline companies submit information about their facilities to state and local governments and it is also important that local communities be involved in planning and preparing for pipeline emergency response efforts. We want to work with pipeline companies to increase the safety and security of pipelines.

- **Provide Adequate Funding for Pipeline Safety**

Both OPS and state pipeline safety programs need the resources to inspect pipelines regularly and be able to follow through on issues of concern. There needs to be more presence and involvement by OPS and state pipeline inspectors in oversight. Additional funding must be provided to help this effort.

We are very pleased that Congress is considering legislation this year. The Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety considers pipeline safety a very important issue both locally and nationally.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chuck Mosher, Chairman

cc. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta  
Members, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
Washington State Congressional Delegation